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New Wave–or Gesture?

The French New Wave may not have existed save in publicity, but it was a useful gambit on that level: it convinced potential moviegoers that films without stars, without "production values," might still be well worth seeing. No comparable American phenomenon yet exists. But the rarity of active, independent American film-making is traceable more to systems of distribution and exhibition than to paucity of talent, imagination, or initiative. Unusual American films do somehow find financing and get made—though often they quickly disappear, as did TAKE A GIANT STEP, THE SAVAGE EYE, WEDDINGS AND BABIES, ON THE BOWERY, *and some film-makers find they must rely on European festivals and personal roadshowings to get their films before their intended public. (John Cassavetes's* SHADOWS *is only now being released in the United States—by a British distributor.) A convenient label for independent American film-making would be a help. So would be the existence of theaters with the stature of the National Film Theatre in London or the Cinématheque in Paris. So would be a flexible attitude on the part of the film unions, whose rigid crew requirements, while understandable as an outgrowth of studio industrial relations, sometimes irrationally restrict young film-makers. No low-budget producers wish to wreck the unions; but they too often find themselves budgeted out of promising projects, largely by high crew costs. The film-maker seeking to make personal films needs time above all—time for imagination, time for invention, both of which may in the end save money. But in Hollywood time* IS *money, and the effects can be frightening: to the Sanders brothers, for instance, facing $800-per-hour charges for overtime, desirable retakes and additional camera angles became an impossible luxury. This pressure of time seems ridiculous to most independent film-makers, and many of them, like Irv Kerschner, seek some new basis (perhaps resembling that which prevailed on Cassavetes's* SHADOWS*) where patience, improvisation, and ingenuity were allowed scope—through reshooting, of course, is never cheap. At any rate, there is a desperate need for some way to escape the present situation, in which the first things an independent film-maker asks another are: How many days did you have? and How much did you go over budget? Meanwhile, much work goes on.*

In the following pages Colin Young and Gideon Bachmann report on current production by a variety of new film-makers. We also call attention to the review of Alex Singer's COLD WIND IN AUGUST, *elsewhere in this issue.*

JOHN CASSAVETES

A whole school of criticism and perhaps of film-making is being built around the minor (although not insignificant) success of Robert Frank and Alfred Leslie's *Pull My Daisy* and the first version of *Shadows*, which Cassavetes himself disowns. These films undoubtedly contain qualities markedly absent in the contrived supermarketed romances produced in Hollywood. But when an unusual film works without relying on traditional form, it can scarcely be imitated without repetition. Thus it is interesting that the critics' enthusiasm for *Shadows* often leads them to make claims for its methods and its style which mystify the author of the film. It is possible that a film-maker does not see the implications of his work as clearly as others. But Cassavetes knew what he was doing with *Shadows*. In a recent interview at Paramount he told me:

"When we shot *Shadows* we rarely had rehearsals for the camera, even though Erich Kollmar the cameraman likes rehearsals. I encouraged him to get it first time, as it happened. Now he likes it that way. I seldom used master shots as we know them [in which the entire action of a scene is covered from one all-inclusive angle] . . . The first week of shooting was just about useless. We were all getting used to each other and to the equipment, but it was not because of the camera movement that we had to throw footage out. In fact, when you try it, you find that natural movement is easier to follow than rehearsed movement, since it has a natural rhythm."

The actors they were using were from a class in an actors' school in New York which Cassavetes founded some years ago with Bert Layne. The film "grew" out of class exercises.

"*Shadows* from beginning to end was a creative accident. We got the things we did because we had nothing to begin with and had to create it, had to improvise it. *If we had had a writer, we would have used a script.* . . . I invented, or conceived the characters of *Shadows*, rather than a story line. A lot was written down about the characters, and before shooting began the actors went out to do life study on these characters. The boy who plays the part of the singer (Hugh Hurd) went around trying to get a job, and finally got one in Philadelphia in a third-rate night club.

"The script, as such, did not exist until after the film was over. Then we made one up just for copyright reasons.

"*Shadows* shot ten weeks the first time around, and to make the second version we shot again for ten days and replaced about three-quarters of it. The first version was filled with what you might call 'cinematic virtuosity'—for its own sake; with angles and fancy cutting and a lot of jazz going on in the background. But the one thing that came at all alive to me after I had laid it aside a few weeks was that just now and again the actors had survived all my tricks. But this did not often happen. They barely came to life. That's why the first version was a mess. When it was shown at the Paris Theater in New York the audience was helped along by a large group of my friends—but I guarantee that 90% of them didn't like it."

However, some people liked it enough to create a brouhaha in its favor. Jonas Mekas and Gideon Bachmann ran it at the Young Men's Hebrew Association in New York for about six performances to packed houses. When the second version came out this was attacked as an emasculation, as a commercial sell-out. "This is very insulting, of course," said Cassavetes, "because as I think you'll discover when you see the film, it is not a 'commercial' film in the usual sense. And I just did not think the first version was very good."

The shooting was in every sense a coöperative venture. Much of the original money was "contributed" (following a radio appeal) and from time to time when they ran out of cash other people would give them enough to carry on for another day—$100 from Josh Logan, something from Jose Quintero, Wyler, Robert Rossen, Sol Siegel, Hedda Hopper.

"All this was terribly exciting, of course, but it is not something I am likely to do again. It's like doing summer stock; it's a good experience

SHADOWS.

to *have had.* I couldn't do it again because, for one thing, I just wouldn't have the energy."

However, Cassavetes has allowed certain working methods to stay with him, and it is likely that they will influence his later work.

"I would, and I will continue to talk for hours with actors. In *Shadows* this was important. Dreams come out in improvisation, not only the exterior things. Furthermore, an actor is concerned with his dignity as a person—he wants this to show in the characterization. The director has to service his actor in this way. And again reality is important to movies in a way it is not to the theater. A theater audience compensates for the lack of reality—they do not expect to see things in gestures, or in the face. They expect to listen more. Movies have to get them to see, as well as listen."

Cassavetes is a young director settling down, but trying to do so on his own terms. This became quite clear when he was talking of his present project, a story called *Too Late Blues* (formerly *Dreams For Sale*) which he has written with television writer Richard Carr and which he will direct for Paramount starting in late March. Bobby Darin and a television actress Stella Stevens are in the cast, otherwise the actors are new. "Some of them are from Hollywood," Cassavetes said, "some I have known from my acting school contacts in New York. The man who plays drums in the band (Bill Stafford) I have known since we acted together in the army. Another of the actors was a fashion designer.

"I have been given the control I need over casting. We had the money (about $375,000) to shoot independently, but there was some risk with this capital as one or two of the investors were questioning the commercial appeal of the story. However, I chose to shoot in a major studio because of the facilities and the technical help. It seemed to me that these facilities are not always as well used as they might be and if I had the opportunity to make what amounts to an art film in a major studio it would be foolish of me not to. However, when you work in a major studio, when the studio owns the story (as they do now), you have to be very clear in your own mind why you are here. If you are here primarily to make money, then compromise is all right, in fact it becomes obligatory. In my case, I have to know when to draw the line, and I have to be prepared to quit at any time. If I am prepared to quit rather than give in to changes, then I am safe. It is only when you are not prepared to do this that you are in trouble. . . .

"Of course studios like Paramount exist to make money, so why shouldn't they admit it? I know where the studio stands on this film of mine and I intend to make it as cheaply as possible, so that I hope it will make money for them. . . .

"But, other things being equal, I will prefer in future to work in a studio to working on location with real sets, especially as in the case of *Too Late Blues* when 98% of the film is interiors. There is a certain excitement you get from location shooting that is sacrificed on the set, because although nothing cannot be built, it remains artificial. But the battling that location shooting involves I am happy to give up. Especially in this case. It is a picture about people, not places."

Too Late Blues is a story of disillusionment. The characters are jazz musicians who play well together, live well together, but had had little commercial success. They play in parks "to the trees and some children on the baseball diamond," they play for charities. It is a free life. They play their own kind of music—no one really has to like it except themselves, and they

make their social life fit their emotional needs. Into their tightly enclosed life comes a girl. Ghost Wakefield, the group's leader, brings her in and then at a crisis lets her down. His friends become involved in a brawl and he cannot bring himself to fight. Losing face, he blusters his way out and offends everyone. The group disintegrates, the girl moves on, and Ghost becomes the protégé of a rich benefactress. Soon he is playing in all the correct clubs, at fancy prices, but he has lost his grip on the happiness he knew before.

"What am I up to in my new film?" Cassavetes said. "I am trying to show the inability of people to recognize that society is ridiculous. Hardly anyone obeys the mores, but they respect them. If they are exposed breaking the mores their lives can collapse.

"Our hero is not a coward, but when he is forced to fight he cannot. In covering up this failure he destroys everything else that is important to him until he ends on rock bottom."

Cassavetes began leafing through his script, selecting scenes to read from, and ending by acting out most of the film. His enthusiasm is infectious, he readily creates the atmosphere of his scene. It would be easy to take direction from him. He is aware of the risks of shooting in a major studio where the overheads are pressing. He believes that he has retained all the necessary controls. He believes that he can make "independent" films for a major studio. Thus he believes he can do something most of his contemporaries have failed to do. He does not put it this way, but it amounts to the same. He is enthusiastic about his cast, about his cameraman (Lionel Linden, who did *I Want to Live!* and part of *Around the World in Eighty Days*, and was cameraman on Cassavetes's TV show *Johnny Staccato*). "He is brilliant, imaginative, fast, knowledgeable." The studio thinks the film will make money, and that it will build on *Shadows*. Cassavetes thinks so too, but clearly, in making a decision to come to Hollywood for feature production, he has also decided to make films where the majority of technical and other talent is available.

IRV KERSHNER

This, substantially, is also the decision of the other independents being discussed here. Irv Kershner is planning a film from a script by Alan Marcus, suggested by the career of a New York psychiatrist who treated schizophrenic patients with "direct analysis." Marcus's script, whose preparation Kershner has underwritten, sets up a very complex time progression—developing a story with characters up to a certain incident, following first one character then another from the point of that incident, in such a way that the story-line is constantly doubling back and forth, filling in with information which could not have been presented by a method which confined itself to one character's point of view. "This is not a realistic story, in the usual sense. Realism is all well and good, but there are so many other possibilities!" Kershner sang out this protest, almost bellowed it, as he paced his living room. "We cannot limit ourselves to the straightforward plot film. We must move on. And we must take the time and use the talent that these developments require.

"One of the requirements, of course, is a professional cast. This is a very difficult script, and should properly be played by the people we had in mind when developing the characters." It is difficult to imagine Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* with an amateur cast, and Resnais's *Hiroshima Mon Amour* might have been helped by less inflexible performers in the leading roles.

DENIS AND TERRY SANDERS

The decision to work with stars or other actors with established reputations and/or styles is usually forced upon the independent producer working with Hollywood money. Some, like the Sanders brothers, have found it profitable (although complicated) to "discover" a new actor and sign him up for a long period in the hope that he will become popular. This is the case with George Hamilton, star of *Crime and Punishment, U.S.A.* Although not a very good actor, he has established himself as something of a favorite. The Sanders are now working on a

two-picture contract with United Artists; UA approached them last year, without seeing *Crime and Punishment*, but with the knowledge that they had Hamilton. When they decided not to use Hamilton, they went back with John Saxon for the first of their two pictures, *War Hunt*. That was acceptable.

In general, United Artists has script, major casting, and budget approval, but in the case of *War Hunt* (an original by Stanford Whitmore) only one person at the office had much to do with the script (Doris Vidor). They gave the Sanders $250,000, although this was later stepped up another $15,000. This is a typical low-budget figure for United Artists for a feature which they expect to give a general release. Since their recent tie-in with Lopert, they are moving into a lower budget level of $150,000, with the possibility of an art-house release. Denis Sanders said recently, "They are a marvelous company to do business with, from our point of view." Terry Sanders added, "We still prefer to work with lower rather than higher budgets, because you can afford to take more risks."

War Hunt (a working title only) has finished shooting, and will be ready for viewing about the end of May. Its leading character is a schizophrenic called Endore (John Saxon). He takes on other men's patrols, goes out without support behind the enemy lines (in Korea), and usually manages to kill someone. "A nightly murder keeps him from tipping over. He maintains his equilibrium only in a battle situation. Since he voluntarily takes on his companions' patrols they have no reason to cross him." The situation is complicated by the presence, in the platoon, of a young Korean orphan (Tommy Matsuda) whom Endore has adopted. A new member of the platoon, Loomis (Robert Redford), objects to his hold over the boy and tries to pry the child loose. This angers Endore, has little effect on the boy, and gets no support from the other members of the platoon, who are prepared to accept the status quo. The inevitable tragedy occurs. When a cease-fire is signed at Panmunjon, and an area between the two armies is staked out as a No Man's Land, Endore again goes out at night, this time taking the boy with him. They catch up with him in the morning, Endore stabs Loomis, the Captain shoots Endore and the boy runs off, deaf to their entreaties to stay. The film will end with him disappearing over the trenches and hills. The Captain turns to Loomis, concerned about his wound. "Are you all right?" he asks. Loomis, still looking after the boy, thinking of that and not the bleeding, replies simply, "No."

"The killing of Endore and the child's escape constitute an incident which most of the men will try to forget. They will wish it had not happened. But Loomis may never be able to forget it. We think the film takes a nonpedestrian view of courage. This in itself is refreshing. The story is not a record of something which actually happened but it is truthful. We are concerned with moral as well as physical courage. Loomis does not have the physical courage of Endore, but he has the courage of his convictions. He has the courage to be unpopular. Through him we hope to show the problem of retaining one's moral values in war.

"If people like Endore, who are crazy, can appear normal or balanced only in war, then it follows that war is an insane condition. Camus's description is appropriate—war is the rationalization of the irrational. The problem of a soldier is how to adjust to the impossible, the irrational, and the undesirable. Some make up a whole new reality, others simply block out the present

From WAR HUNT.

one. War is a condition in which insanity becomes invisible. We want to make the connection between neurosis in private life and psychosis in war."

This was a subject which they felt had a commercial application and yet was still something they could have a commitment to. The story for their second film for United Artists has not been settled on yet.

The question inevitably came up about their relationship throughout the production to the army. They had made a routine request, through the local representative of the Department of the Army, for Army coöperation. "But," Terry Sanders said, "it was a little embarrassing asking them for their support. Our film is not anti-army, but it does show the army in a very unfavorable light. In the end, anyway, they decided not to support us. This did not make too much difference to the budget, and it was probably better not to have an official army man on the set all the time. He might have had some sort of psychological hold on us, just by being there. We preferred to do it alone."

The results, so far as I have seen them, and what I have heard of the rest, seem convincing enough. There is little doubt that the occasional uncertainties of *Crime and Punishment*, particularly in dialogue scenes, will be gone here. And the action material is reportedly excellent. John Saxon as Endore has an extremely interesting quality. The editing is being done by John Hoffman, for many years an assistant and collaborator of Slavko Vorkapich. The camera work is by Ted McCord, who replaced Floyd Crosby after a few days of shooting.

CURTIS HARRINGTON

Curtis Harrington is completing his first feature, *Night Tide*. Unlike Cassavetes, who is planning to make an art film in a studio, Harrington intends his film for general release although, as he admits, "There are some esoteric things in it, including some unrealistic dreams, a performance by the painter Cameron as a mysterious Woman in Black, and a rather complete explanation by a fortune teller (Marjorie Eaton) of Tarot cards. I will be interested to see whether this scene holds the audience's attention. But, on the whole, I made the film as a story teller, not on an abstract level as in my experimental films."

The script, also by Harrington, was based on an unpublished short story written a few years ago called *Secrets of the Sea*.

The plot concerns a young sailor (Dennis Hooper), who falls in love with Mora (Linda Lawson), a strange girl who believes herself to be descended from an ancient race of sea people (sirens), and feels she is doomed to return to the sea. She has been adopted by a retired sea-captain who operates a side show at Ocean Park and employs the girl as a mermaid. The two young men who had previously known Mora both drowned "in mysterious circumstances." Whenever the Woman in Black appears, Mora becomes frighened and sad. In the end, at one level, there is a perfectly logical explanation of everything which happens, including the final tragedy, but the coincidental presence of the Woman in Black at key moments suggests there is more to it than chance.

"My audience will, I hope, identify with the young man," Harrington told me, "although his situation is fantastic rather than real in the usual sense. There are two dream sequences in the film. They work in much the same way as I think do Buñuel's, but I was not thinking of that at the time. And the film is not at all like Buñuel's—the things which preoccupy me are not those which concern him. *Night Tide* would be too tender for him, I would think. But the dreams are there—one of them is presented as such, and the other is less obvious. The line between dream and reality becomes very thin. The dreams are not unreal in the usual sense—I prefer the French *irréel*. They are not so much unreal as there is simply a shift in perception. These dreams represent the unconsciousness of the hero, so to that extent they are similar to Buñuel."

Considering Curtis Harrington's long expressed admiration of Josef von Sternberg, I asked him if he thought Sternberg would like the film.

"Well, he's god, and I admire him, but he would never indicate what he thought of my work, or speak of his own.

"I think it is not generally understood that it was not George Stevens so much as von Sternberg who first introduced the long lap dissolve [in which one scene gradually replaces another by superimposition]. Stevens did not use it before *A Place in the Sun*, and it is probable that when he was preparing it he looked at von Sternberg's treatment of the Dreiser story in his film *An American Tragedy*. Stevens used it again in *Something to Live For*, his next film, and of course he used it to a lesser extent in *Giant*. I think in a couple of places I have used the device extremely effectively."

To make the film Harrington took a leave of absence from his position as assistant to Jerry Wald at Twentieth Century-Fox. "I took about four weeks shooting, and about the same editing. I did the cutting with Jody Copeland. I benefited from his experience, particularly in the dialogue sequences."

"Directing this dialogue film was a new experience. All my experimental films were conceived as silent films, then had sound added. I have not directed in the theater, and did not have the benefit of practice in that kind of staging. However, this was a fairly carefully considered film, although the first scene involving a large number of people gave me some trouble. After this first day I knew in advance what I wanted, so I was fairly certain to be covered. It was only the first day that I was not, when I and everyone else forgot to cover one important line. I have had to do some pretty fancy cutting to get around it.

"I shot in master scenes for the benefit of the actors, not for my own taste. Dennis Hopper, being a 'method' actor, did not like working in truncated scenes. Thus more film stock was used than I had planned—a difference of about $2,000. I rehearsed the key scenes here in my living room for about a week before shooting, and this was of inestimable value for the performances. I also had one reading with the assembled cast, from beginning to end. From this I learned a lot about the pacing required, about the dramatic continuity which I was going to have to catch.

"The schedule was determined by exigencies, not by the script's continuity. But this did not bother me, with the reading behind me. I had the concept in mind. We struck to the script, only occasionally changing lines on the set, the only improvisation coming from the behavior of the actors." (Cassavetes had said that he was not committed in advance to his dialogue and would welcome changes by the actors, so long as the sense of the scene remained.)

Harrington's producer was Aram Kantarian, a contract negotiator at MCA. Pathé laboratory in Hollywood put up the principal financing, after a little encouragement from another independent producer, Roger Corman. Then some five or six other investors contributed money, in amounts varying from $1,000 to $12,000. Two of the largest contributors were regular film finance sources, but the others were friends. The money needed for completion was $5,000, and this was obtained from Harrington's family. (The directors of the French New Wave, Harrington pointed out, often had *all* their financing from family sources.) "We got our money without a distribution guarantee, and this is where Roger Corman came in very useful. We knew about Shirley Clarke's method of financing her film [see below], but I don't believe this method will work on the West Coast. We tried it at first, but failed to find enough interested investors. The type of person who backs plays in New York does not exist out here. We thought we might at one time have to go to New York for our money.

"Within the limitations of the budget, after the initial acceptance of the script by the backers, I was permitted complete freedom. I would doubtless have done things less simply if I had had more time—the camera work would have been more intricate. . . . But I think you will agree it worked out quite well."

OTHERS

Meanwhile, others among the independents have finished films. There is a second feature

by Stanley Colbert, producer of *Private Property*, this one called *Arena*, from a script by Joseph Landos and directed by Buzz Kulik. It was financed by United Artists. Michael DuPont and Newton Arnold have completed *The Answer* with private money, reportedly much of it DuPont family money. Alex Singer has released *A Cold Wind in August* and Tom Laughlin is trying to find distribution for the first film of a trilogy, entitled *Like Father, Like Son* (the general title of the trilogy is *We Are All Christ*).

This discussion has scarcely taken us near the motives and ambitions of the individual filmmakers, but the pattern is clear. There is considerable interdependency and cross-fertilization within the various companies at the level of financing and technical help—*War Hunt* uses Roger Corman's assistant director, Floyd Crosby and Ted McCord are most often asked to photograph, David Raksin is doing the score for *Night Tide*, and a theme for *Too Late Blues*. But the companies are scattered in their intentions and their story material. There is no unity of style or approach to subject matter. There is only a shared interest in film-making. This is not the independence Jonas Mekas is talking about. But it is also a far cry from the so-called independence of the larger star-dominated companies who use studios only as facilities.

Marlon Brando's company is as good an example of this as any. His *One-Eyed Jacks* turns out to be a costly, competent period Western, with better than average playing and characterization. They shot for six months and cut for two years (recently reshooting the ending in a way more appropriate to the romantic fiction which precedes it).

But the way of Brando, Gregory Peck, Kirk Douglas, or Burt Lancaster (through Hecht-Lancaster) is not the way of the true independent. They are working within the safeties of large budgets, expensive supporting casts (sometimes better actors than themselves), and extravagant stories. They are also surrounded by the soft-mulch system of committee editing in which groups make decisions about story and performance and structure—few individual judgments are risked. This is not the way of the independent who wishes to take his own risks and make his own mistakes. To this extent Cassavetes might be thought to speak for the rest when he says, "Many artists fear that they will never make another picture. To avoid failure at their own hands they relinquish control to others, and then blame others for any mistakes which ensue. It is a cowardly way."

It is a common way, but it is not the way of the director discussed here. If they have made mistakes, they are responsible. If they learn and are given another chance, they will improve. But at this stage it is at least important that they should be supported in their attempt. In each of their films there will be something of value on which they might be encouraged to build. Until the distribution system exists which can ferret out the specialized audiences for special films, audiences must assume some of the responsibility—and the distinction—for making their own discoveries. This is the least the filmmaker can ask.—COLIN YOUNG

SHIRLEY CLARKE

Occasionally a film is made because one person decides that it should happen. In most cases this one person is either a producer or at least someone who can make and carry through such a decision because he has either experience or material resources to fall back on. When Shirley Clarke saw the off-Broadway play by Jack Gelber upon which *The Connection* is based, she had neither of those, except that she had made some documentary films in 16mm and some experimental-poetic shorts. But in today's atmosphere of what might be called the new Expressive American Cinema, anyone with the guts to try and the talent to carry it off can make a film. And from all reports to date, *The Connection* appears to be one of those legendary "firsts" like *Citizen Kane* or *Breathless*, which not only excel filmically, but also set standards for other film work. In short, *The Connection* is *important*. There is no doubt that in many

ways this will be a pace-setting film, from the points of view of form, impact, and method of production.

The film cost $167,000 to make. This amount was raised—as money is raised in the legitimate theater—through the syndicate approach. A "limited partnership" is formed, which means that shares in the film are sold to a large number of small investors: in the case of this film, over two hundred of them. This type of financing has the advantage of allowing complete artistic freedom to the director, besides making it easier to raise the money itself, in smaller individual amounts than standard financing would have necessitated. The film was shot on a single, closed set, representing a loft, which was constructed in minutely realistic detail at New York's Production Center studios. The finished film includes no shots not taken in that room, and it utilized a unique mobile camera, shots of more than ten-minute duration in some cases, and lighting carefully simulating the falling dusk during the film's two-hour length, which represents two hours of actual elapsed time.

The Connection also breaks other, long-established movie axioms. For one thing, the camera plays a part in the film itself, and thus a new kind of audience identification is created, which borders on audience *participation*; the camera represents the viewer. This, in fact, is part of the intention of its appearance: the actors (most of them from the original cast of the play) are confronted by its peering presence, and begin to act for it, so that their reality is geared to the intrusion of the spectator. This is as close as film has ever come to providing the creative "feedback" which live performances often cause as a result of the interaction between actor and audience. The script for this unique method of film-making was conceived by Shirley Clarke and was written in collaboration with the play's original author. Jack Gelber was present on the set during much of the shooting, and conferences between the two took place daily.

The film was shot in nineteen days, and at this writing is still being edited. It has been invited to be screened at the Cannes Festival, *hors concours*, as the special presentation of the Association des Auteurs et Réalisateurs du Cinéma, which yearly invites one film because it believes it to be of great importance though it has not been otherwise submitted.

The film was shot with complete union crews. Some delays were caused by the fact that many of the camera movements and other technical things had never been attempted before, and more than once did the union men complain "You can't do that." In one case, Shirley Clarke finally had to shoot a scene herself with a hand-held camera, and thus one more technical impossibility was made possible. However, she avows that as a general principle she found many of the union people ready to experiment with new ideas.

The importance of *The Connection* is not so much in the manner in which it was made or in its final quality. It is important primarily because it *was* made, and because it was made with a clear consciousness of audience participation. This is really a most important point, and one which ties in with the work of film-makers in Italy (Antonioni), Japan (Kurasawa), France (Godard), and Poland (Wajda), who are all working toward the establishment of a new, expressive cinematic syntax, the basic element of which is greater allowance for public intelligence and discrimination. All the films made by these people, and *The Connection* perhaps most of all, are antifilmic in the sense that they do not *explain* but *present*, and that only to the extent that nature presents itself to the artist to be moulded in his vision.

In this sense, *The Connection* is probably the most up-to-date work, culturally, that the United States has produced for some time, and its appearance at this time ties in with other cultural developments outside of the cinema. Objectivism in literature, the revival of alienation in theater, some of the best of beat poetry, all point to an increased transference of artistic-creative responsibility to the recipient. Thus *The Connection* cannot really be subjected to standard criticism, which tends toward the establishment of objective judgments on the perception level alone; rather, its final impact will actually depend on the degree to which each viewer is able to *give* to it of his own substance and his own life.—GIDEON BACHMANN